Oklahoma Chess Monthly

JUNE 2021

Chess News and Chess History for Oklahoma

In This Issue:

• OSCO Championship
• Tournament Listings
• IM Donaldson Book Review
• Plus News Bites, Game of the Month, Puzzles, Top 25 List, Tournament Reports, and more.

Editor's Note –

A brief issue this month.

The main news is that the schedule for over-the-board tournaments in this region continues to form up, and we are announcing four OCF events here along with the Kansas Open and many others in a full listing starting on page eight.

Organizers are hoping that "Covid restrictions" like wearing masks during games will be lifted soon for events. But it would be a good idea to check with each event a few weeks prior to see what each particular one will require, if anything.

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OKLAHOMA SCHOLASTIC CHAMPIONSHIPS QUALIFY FOUR TITLISTS FOR THE NATIONAL EVENTS AT THE U.S. OPEN

Ryan Amburgy
Oscar Wang
Elizabeth Braddy
Benjamin Li

After more than a year layoff in scholastic over-the-board play the top juniors in Oklahoma met again to determine slots in the national tournaments of scholastic champions. The event was held by OSCO on May 22, at the Harvard Avenue Baptist Church in Tulsa. The players were limited to only the top-rated players and qualifiers in the state, so the competition was tough among those remaining.

Top-rated Ryan Amburgy (2215) unsurprisingly won the top K-12 high school section 4-0 but only after surprising a big scare in round 2 from Narren Pullela. Narren is quite talented and much better than his 1700-rating coming in (a former 1900). From the white side of a Bogo-Indian he outplayed Ryan and won the exchange in the middlegame. But Ryan didn't panic and put up lots of resistance. Narren fell into time trouble and lost on time in a winning position.

Ryan will again represent the state in the Denker National Tournament of High School Champions this August at the U.S.Open.

The K-8 event was hard fought among several very strong players, including the two Maxs – Maxwell Barnes (1978) and Maxwell Xie (1862). But it was Oscar Wang (under-rated at 1819) who upset both of them to win the title. Joshua Li had a strong event to finish second.

The key game was Wang-Barnes, which was heading for a draw in the endgame until Max blundered a piece to a knight fork. That set up the last-round confrontation between Wang and Maxwell Xie, which followed the same opening they played last year. That game is annotated as the "Game of the Month" below. Oscar will again represent the state in the Barber National Tournament of Middle School Champions this August.

The K-5 Section went down to a blitz playoff between Benjamin Li and newcomer Hudson Fong. Li won and will represent the state at the Rockefeller National Tournament of Elementary School Champions in August.

The Girls title again came down to the battle between Victorija Zilajeva (1469) and Elizabeth Braddy (1425) after their game was drawn. Elizabeth pulled the small upset for the second year in a row in a blitz playoff and will represent the state in the Ruth Haring National Girls Tournament of Champions for the second year in a row.

The top scorers in each section also received free entry into the Steve Wharry Consat Classic.

The TD was Jerry Casteel, a recent transplant to Tulsa from South Dakota with his wife Katarina. He is getting a real estate license and also developing as a tournament director.

The tournament sponsor was OSCO, organized by Chris Amburgy.

For crosstables see this link: http://www.uschess.org/msa/XtblMain.php?202105220252.0-15409954

Ryan Amburgy (left) vs Narren Pullela

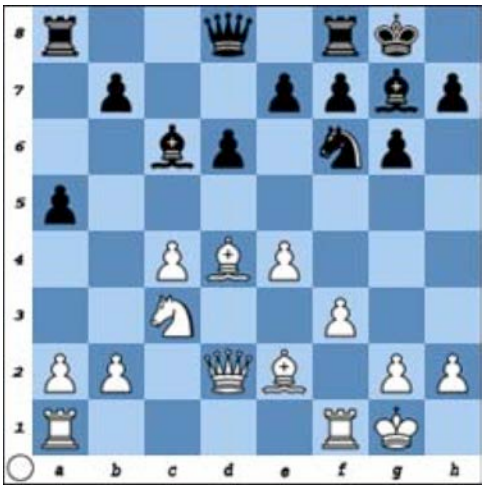
Elizabeth Braddy (left) vs Victorija Zilajeva. Behind are Miranda Huang and Clara Ford.

Max Barnes (left) vs Oscar Wang in round 3.

Narren Pullela in Unabomber style.

Xie, Maxwell (1869)
Wang, Oscar (1819) [B38]
OSCO State Championship Tulsa, Oklahoma (4), 22.05.2021
[Notes by Tom B.]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6 5.c4 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Nc3 0-0 8.Be2 d6 9.0-0 Bd7 10.f3 a5 11.Qd2 Nxd4 12.Bxd4 Bc6



By a transposition of moves the two players have reached the same position they played in their game from the previous OSCO championship, in early March 2020 (the last event before the lockdown).

13.b3

Last year's game went 13.Nd5 Nd7 14.Rac1 e6 15.Bxg7 Kxg7 16.Nf4 with a tense position that was annotated here in the OCM April 2020 issue. No doubt the two players had each looked again at this opening and had new ideas in mind for this rich position. Maxwell has chosen the most common move, approved by theory to get a slight edge.

TOP 25

For June 2021

	Active Oklahoma Players			
	Player	This Month	Change	
1	Advait Patel	2537	0	
2	Howard Zhong	2307	0	
3	Ryan Amburgy	2221	6	
4	Tom Braunlich	2200	0	
5	Mark Hulsey	2190	0	
6	Anthony Paolercio	2080	0	
7	Veronika Zilajeva	2080	0	
8	Tom Patton	2077	0	
9	Charles D Unruh	2063	0	
10	James Long	2054	0	
11	Sean Andrechak	2043	0	▲
12	Michael Nugent	2042	0	▼
13	Charles M Unruh	2024	0	▼
14	Matt Dalthorp	2015	0	▼
15	Chuck Johnson	2010	0	▼
16	Jeff Colbert	2008	0	▼
17	Stephen Gehly	2000	0	▼
18	David Luscomb	1995	0	▼
19	Logan Zachare	1991	0	▼
20	Maxwell Barnes	1965	-25	▼
21	Joe Dean Veal	1940	0	▼
22	Paul Hodgden	1935	0	▼
23	Wayne Hatcher	1926	0	▼
24	Harold Brown Jr.	1901	0	▼
25	Oscar Wang	1873	54	▲

Player of the Month

OSCAR WANG

Oscar won the tough competition for the slot in the Barber championship and I feel he is overdue for a big upward jump in 2021.

13...Nd7 14.Be3

Of course white can also exchange bishops, but that position is considered fairly level because white's dark squares are weakened more than black's. A recent example is: 14.Bxg7 Kxg7 15.Rab1 Qb6+ 16.Kh1 Nc5 17.a3 Nxb3 18.Qb2 a4 19.Nd5+ Qd4 20.Nxe7 Rfe8 21.Nxc6 bxc6 22.Rfd1 Qxb2 23.Rxb2 Rad8 24.Kg1 Re5 25.Bd3 Rc5 with a nice game for black.

14...Nc5 15.Rfd1

14… Be5

Oscar chooses an aggressive sideline of this book position -- one which outposts the B aggressively, looking at h2, and dares white to weaken his pawns with f3-f4 to push it back.

16.Rac1 e6!?

Badly weakening d6, but taking away the d5 square for white and, more importantly, intending ...Qh4 ideas. This position has also been reached in master games, and if the players were familiar with it, they seem to have come to different conclusions. This is a key position, and white has to decide if ...Qh4 is a real threat, and how to react. There are lots of choices. He can stop it with moves like Qe1 or g3. He can prepare to defend the kingside with Bf1. He can trade bishops with Bd4, or he can take up the challenge and attack d6 directly with Nb5.

17.Nb5?!

Courageous, but risky. Black's attack is

PUZZLES

Answers Next Page

White to move and win. (Easy)

Black to move and win. (Difficult)

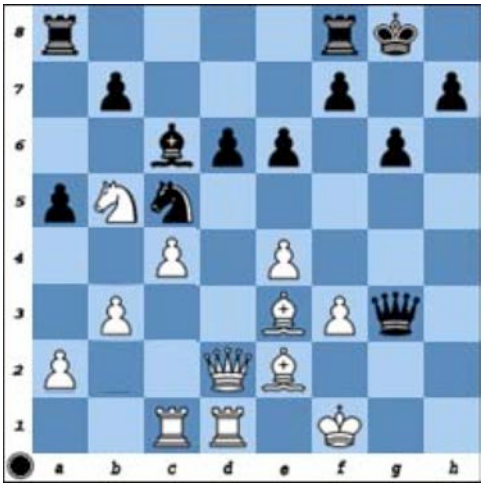
stronger than it looks. Here is how GM Wang Hao played it for white: 17.Bf1 Qe7 *(17...Qh4 18.g3 Bxg3? 19.hxg3 Qxg3+ 20.Qg2)* 18.Ne2 Rfd8 19.Nd4 Be8 20.Qf2Y 1-0 (56) Wang Hao (2729) - Iturrizaga (2653) Dubai 2014]

17...Qh4 18.g3

[18.f4 Nxe4]

18...Bxg3 19.hxg3 Qxg3+ 20.Kf1

[20.Kh1 Nxe4 etc.]



20...Qh3+?

This move shows that Oscar had conceived this sacrifice by intuition over-the-board and had not studied it in advance. Otherwise he'd have known that the computer points out: 20...Nxe4! looks like it wins, because if 21.fxe4 black opens the f-file with 21...f5! White can't then keep it closed with 22.e5 because of 22...Bg2+ 23.Kg1 Bh3+ and mate. So the rook enters the game down the f-file and black would have had good winning chances.

21.Kf2 Qh2+ 22.Kf1 Qh3+ 23.Ke1 Qh1+

Both players are trying to avoid the perpetual check! There is one GM game in the database where black took the perpetual check here, a blitz game. With two pawns for the piece and difficulty in enhancing the attack, that's probably best for black. But Oscar rolls the dice!

24.Bf1 Qxf3 25.Nxd6

[25.Qf2 Qh1 26.Nxd6 Nxe4 27.Nxe4 Qxe4 would be similar.]

25...Nxe4 26.Nxe4 Bxe4 *(continued page 7…)*

Answers to the Puzzles

(1) This position could have occurred in the famous game Bronstein-Ljubojevic, 1973. White mates with 1. Rg8+!! If then …Kxg8 2. Qg1+ is the move (backward retreating moves on the diagonal are the hardest to see!) 2…Kh8 3. Qg7#

(2) From Anand-Kasparov world championship match in the 1990s. Both the black rooks are hanging. How did Kasparov get out of this mess?
1… Rxc2!! Now whichever rook white takes black will get it back, i.e. 2. Rxc2, Rc3+ forces white into a discovered check: 3. Ka2, Re3+ and wins!

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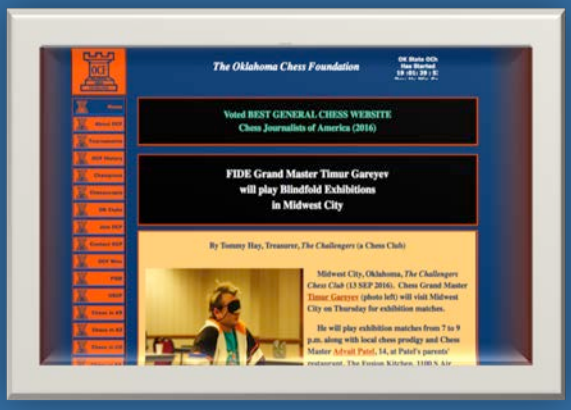
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Chess Journalists of America (2016)
FIDE Grand Master Timur Gareyev
will play Blindfold Exhibitions
in Midwest City

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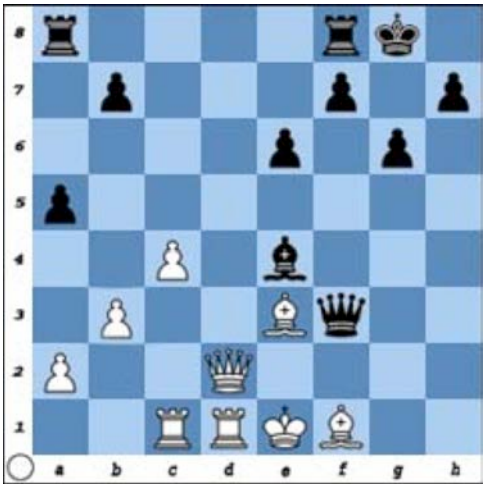
GAME OF THE MONTH … Continued.



What do you think of this position? In a practical game the open white king is vulnerable and the black pawns look like they could march like Space Invaders down the board. So, Black might reasonably be satisfied. In a rapid time control, anything can happen. However, objectively white is better, specifically because he has a strong maneuver now available.

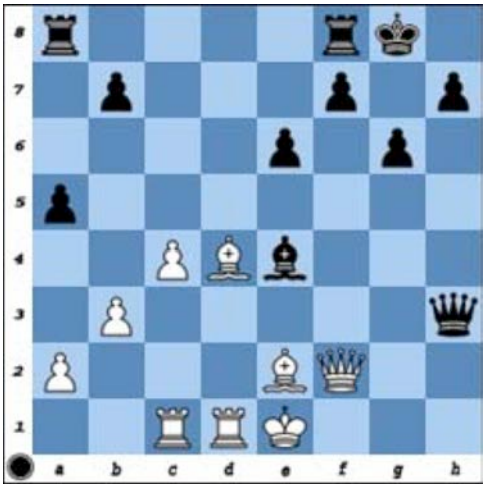
27.Qf2! Qg4?

[Maybe black has to agree to the exchange of queens here, although that would make white's task easier. 27...e5 28.Qxf3 Bxf3]

28.Be2?

[Maxwell misses his chance! No doubt the players were low on time here. 28.Qf6 looks like a killer, threatening Bh6 and preventing ...Rd8. 28...Qg3+ 29.Bf2 forces 29...Qf3 with a queen exchange. Or if 28.Qf6 Qh5 29.Bd4]

28...Qh3 29.Bd4



29…e5!?

I like this creative try by Oscar.

The alternative is 29...f5 but it looks slow and white's rooks could try to invade the weakened seventh rank. Instead he jettisons a pawn to get his rook in the game from a6, where it will also defend the f6 invasion square from white.

A very nice attempt to fight for the initiative.

30.Bxe5 Ra6 31.Rc3 Qh1+ 32.Bf1

[32.Kd2! Rd8+ 33.Kc1 Rxd1+ 34.Bxd1 Re6 white's K is safe and he should be winning.]

32...Qh5 33.Qf4?

An unfortunate mistake by Maxwell loses to tactics on the e-file. He should have answered this with 33.Bd6 Re8 34.Re3 etc.

33...Re6! 34.Bd6

[Of course, if 34.Qxe4, Rxe5 the white queen is pinned. If 34.Re3 Qxe5 35.Qxe5 Rxe5 36.Bg2 Rfe8 is the way. Otherwise, retreating the attacked white Bishop allows a deadly discovered check.]

34...Bc2+

[This shot wins a rook and after a further time scramble, the game.]

35.Kf2 Qxd1 36.Rf3 Qxd6 37.Re3 Qxf4+ 38.Ke1 Qxe3+ 39.Be2 Qxe2#

0-1

Here is a good listing of regional events of which I'm aware, including several new ones.

June 25-27 2021 OCA 76th ANNUAL OKLAHOMA OPEN Broken Arrow OK
5-SS. G/90;d5 and G/120;d5. Three sections. $1000 Guaranteed Prizes. Includes OCA's annual membership meeting Sunday morning. For more info see:
https://www.ochess.org

July 17-18 2021 KANSAS OPEN Lawrence KS
5-SS. G/100;d5. Three Sections. SpringHill Suites, One Riverfront Plaza, Lawrence KS 66044 HR: $129. EF: $55 in advance ONLY. No onsite registration. Blitz and Bughouse tournaments on Friday July 16. Prizes: $2100. For full information see:
http://www.kansaschess.org/htdocs/2021KansasOpenFlierv2.pdf

July 17-18 2021 QUEEN CITY OF THE PRAIRIE OPEN Fort Worth TX
5-SS. For more info see:
https://new.uschess.org/4th-annual-queen-city-prairie-open-fort-worth-championship

July 23-25 2021 2021 U.S. CLASS CHAMPIONSHIP Houston TX
National championship for class sections. For more info see:
https://new.uschess.org/2021-us-class-chess-championships

Aug 7 and Aug 14 STEVE WHARRY CONSAT CLASSIC Tulsa OK
4-SS with two traditional G/90+30 games played on each of two Consecutive Saturdays. Harvard Avenue Baptist Church, 3235 E. 17th St. (17th & Harvard), Tulsa, OK. Three Sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Novice (U1200). Prizes (b/30): Open: 1st-$200, X: $100, A: $100. Reserve: 1st-$125, C: $100, D: $100. Novice: 1st $125. U1000/UNR: $100. More if entries allow. REG: Each day, 9:00-10:15am. Rounds: 10:30am and 3:00pm each day. BYES: Two ½-point byes for either day if you can't make it to one of the game days. Entry Fee: $30 for both days, $20 per day if you can only play one day. Adv. Entries: www.paypal.me/Braunlich or T.Braunlich, 1638 S. Carson Ave #803, Tulsa OK 74119. Info: tom.braunlich@cox.net LS W. Free coffee and refreshments.

Sep 25-26 TBA OKC OK
A planned one-day rapid event slated for Oklahoma City. Details TBA.

Oct 9 -10 53rd JERRY SPANN MEMORIAL Tulsa OK
5-SS, G/90;+30. Site: Tulsa Holiday Inn CITY CENTER, 17 W. Seventh Street, **Tulsa** OK 74119. 918-585-5898. **HR**: $95. **Three Sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Novice** (U1200). **EF:** $45 if mailed by 10/4, $55 thereafter, with these discounts: $10 off for Seniors over age 60, FREE for Masters 2200+ (deducted from winnings). FREE entry for new USChess

members or those renewing after 18 months off. **Registration:** 9-9:45am Sat 10/9. **Prizes $$2000** (1st Prize Gtd. each section, rest b/55 paid entries): Open: $500(G)-200, X: 200, A: 175. Reserve **(U1800):** $250(G) C: 175 D: 175, **Novice (U1200):** $200(G), 1000/below: $125. **Rounds:** 10-2:30-7, 9-1:15. **Byes**: One 1/2-pt bye Rds. 1-5 if commit before Sat 9pm. **Adv. Entries:** www.paypal.me/Braunlich or mail T.Braunlich, 1638 S. Carson Ave.#803 Tulsa OK 74119. **Info:** tom.braunlich@cox.net. Website: ocfchess.org LS W. ***CHECK prior to the tournaments for possible last-minute COVID virus policy changes.**

Nov 13-14 5th FRANK K BERRY MEMORIAL Stroud OK

5-SS, G/90;+30. Site: Cattle Country Lodge, 1200 N 8th Ave, Stroud, OK 74079. (Turner Turnpike, Exit 179, then north 200 yards to other side of turnpike.) **HR**: $95. **Three Sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Novice** (U1200). **EF:** $45 if mailed by 11/9, $55 thereafter, FREE for Masters 2200+ (deducted from winnings). **Registration:** 9-9:45am Sat 11/13. **Prizes $$2200** (1st Prize Gtd. each section, rest b/55 paid entries): Open: $550(G)-250, X: 200, A: 200. Reserve **(U1800):** $250(G) C: 200 D: 200, **Novice (U1200):** $200(G), 1000/below: $150. **Rounds:** 10-2:30-7, 9-1:15. **Byes**: One 1/2-pt bye Rds. 1-5 if commit before Sat 9pm. **Adv. Entries:** www.paypal.me/Braunlich or mail T.Braunlich, 1638 S. Carson Ave.#803 Tulsa OK 74119. **Info:** tom.braunlich@cox.net. Website: ocfchess.org LS W. ***CHECK prior to the tournaments for possible last-minute COVID virus policy changes.**

Dec 18 Annual Holiday Open ?? OK

4-SS, Rapid Chess. Details TBA

By IM John Donaldson

Three New Books from Russell Enterprises. May 2021

The latest books by this venerable firm, which has been around for over three decades, reflect its constantly diverse offerings. While many chess publishers emphasize opening books, Russell Enterprises ((www.russell-enterprises.com) puts out publications on all aspects of the game.

Every chess player has heard of the Colle System - 1.d4, 2.Nf3 and 3.e3 followed by the moves Bd3, Nbd2, 0-0, c3 followed by e4 played – but few know much about its creator who is the subject of Taylor Kingston's *The Fighting Chess of Edgar Colle: Caissa's Wounded Warrior* (2021, figurine algebraic, 272 pages, $24.95).

While there are over a dozen books on the Colle (those by Lakdawala and Palisser top the list), there is only one prior work in English on the man, which was written by Fred Reinfeld back in 1936. The original plan was to reprint that book, the only change converting the English descriptive notation into algebraic.

Kingston, in his introduction, explains that would not have sufficed as the notes by Reinfeld and Colle's contemporaries needed major updating. This work, done with the help of strong computer engines, makes up the bulk of *The Fighting Chess of Edgar*

Colle. Kingston has also added additional games and the current work now has 109 annotated games and game fragments.

The reader will also find crosstables of the tournaments Colle played in from 1919 to 1931, a complete match record, player and opening indices and a foreword from Andy Soltis putting Colle's career into content (he was rated as high as number 14 in the world using retroactive ratings compiled by Chessmetrics.com).

What you won't find in this book is a complete biography. Kingston, who is a well-known chess historian, has compiled a list of tributes to Colle written after his death by the likes of Max Euwe and Hans Kmoch. Invariably they mention how nice and stoic Colle was, never complaining about his constant health issues which culminated with him dying at only 34 years of age. Beyond that little seems to be known of his life, Colle preferring to let his games speak for him.

One curiosity to be learned in *The Fighting Chess of Edgar Colle: Caissa's Wounded Warrior* is that the last round battle between Rubinstein and Colle played at Rotterdam 1931 was final tournament game played by both great players. One wonders how often that has happened in chess history. Note Kingston has confined Colle's efforts to one-on-one completions or the consultation tournament held January 3-5, 1932, in Rotterdam, where Landau, Rubinstein, Colle and Tartakower changed teammates each round might have been included. This unusual event was played with a time control of five hours for 40 moves!

One individual, who is for the most part missing in this book, is Colle's fellow Belgian (later American) George Koltanowski. One might argue that no one did more to keep Colle's memory alive than Kolti through his advocacy of the Colle System in his games and writings.

It may be that Kingston felt that it prudent to leave him out as Kolti, like Miguel Najdorf, was a gifted raconteur albeit one known to fudge the facts for a good story.

One last curiosity about Colle is participation in Olympiads. He played and did well in the first two Olympiads (Paris 1924 and Budapest 1926) but did not play in others (1927, 1928, 1930 and 1931). To be fair Belgium did not participate in every event, but there seems to be an untold story here. Maybe Colle, who was a professional chess player, did not get on well with the Belgium chess federation, which was run by amateurs. Kingston hints at this but it would have been interesting to know more

Some unanswered questions remain, but *The Fighting Chess of Edgar Colle: Caissa's Wounded Warrior* goes far in bringing the Belgian great the attention he deserves.

A chess player from 1971 teleported fifty years into the future would find much has changed with their beloved game, particularly the influence of computers, the replacement of analog clocks with digital ones and the elimination of adjournments. While these are all significant, perhaps the biggest surprise might be some of the openings that have become popular. Who could have imagined half a century ago that the London System and Guioco Piano would occupy center stage?

Add the Exchange Variation of the French Defense, subject of a new book by American Grandmaster Alex Fishbein (*The Exchange French Comes to Life*; 2021, figurine algebraic, 240 pages, $24.95), to the list of openings that have undergone a major reevaluation.

The Exchange Variation of the French was traditionally seen as a drawing line that produced boring play. Not anymore. One clue that things were changing was Gary Kasparov's adoption of it in the 1990s, albeit primarily in simuls. More recently Magnus Carlsen has played it on a number of occasions, reaching the main position via both 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5 4.Nf3 and 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.d3 Nf6 6.d4.

The longer version via the Petroff is not the only opening transposition that can arise from the Exchange French as Fishbein points out. The Queen's Gambit Accepted lines 3.e3 e5 and 3.Nc3 e5 both lead to a less common IQP position where Black has a pawn on c6 and not e6. This can also appear on the board when White opts for c4 in the Exchange French. Fishbein believes this advance should be held in reserve until Black has committed his bishop to d6 (for example 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5 4.Nf3 Bd6 5.c4). The Anti-Berlin Variation 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.0-0 Nxe4 5.Re1 also leads to the characteristic Exchange French pawn structure.

The Exchange French Comes to Life is part opening book and part middle game treatise. Fishbein presents the plans for both sides in 93 carefully annotated model games (including several of his own), but also offers concrete analysis of the critical lines in the chapter Your Repertoire File. There is also a bonus chapter on the line 1.e4 e6 2.c4 or 1.c4 e6 2.e4, the move-order favored by its chief proponent, the Latvian Grandmaster Normunds Miezis. This variation, recommended by Simon Williams and Richard Palliser in their new book *The Iron English*, typically leads to the aforementioned non-traditional IQP positions where Black's light-squared bishop is not locked in. Black, by developing his bishop to e7, should not have any theoretical problems, but practical experience counts for a lot in such positions as Miezis has shown on many occasions.

The Exchange French Comes to Life is a thoughtful book that will be useful reading for those looking for something to play against the French, those who meet 1.e4 with 1…e6 or those who are simply interested in learning more about chess, especially the modern trend to play for two results (win or draw) in a controlled but full-fledged flight that extends across the board. Magnus Carlsen is the leading exponent of this approach and Firouza-Lenderman, Astana 2019, (from a Petroff) a model example of the difficulties Black can face in symmetrical positions with an open e-file.

Understanding Queen Endgames by Karsten Müller and Yakov Konoval (2021, figurine algebraic, 271 pages, $24.95) is not a book for the average player. This exceptional work targets players 2200 on up mostly because the subject material is so complicated. That said those who are interested in improving their endgame play and understanding of chess in general will find this work invaluable. It speaks volumes that Vladimir Kramnik praises it in the introduction for breaking new ground.

Understanding Queen Endgames examines much more ground than one might initially suspect. The endgame of queen and pawn(s) versus queen is covered, but this is only a small portion of the book which analyses all matter of endings involving queens, many not previously examined

One tends to think of the opening as the area where computer engines have had the most influence on chess but endgame theory has also been affected as shown in many of the examples in *Understanding Queen Endgames.* The level of difficulty in many of the games shown is such that top-level players frequently make mistakes.

Some of the positions selected have been chosen for their theoretical rather than practical value (the longest with two rooks and pawn versus queen takes 244 moves to win!), but the numerous exercises provide excellent training material. In particular the many examples of defending and trying to break down fortresses are worth the price of the book.

Understanding Queen Endgames is not for everyone, but for those who already have a strong foundation in this part of the game and are eager to learn more it will be invaluable.